part of the Holy Spirit … the female principle in faith, in art, in all of life'" (329). Divining *Margaret Laurence* is indeed a welcome and much needed text. Bringing all of Laurence's life-work together, the book is engaging and insightful. It pays tribute to one of Canada's most honorable literary figures.

Laura K. Davis

Bill Schwarz, ed. *Caribbean Literature after Independence: The Case of Earl Lovelace*. London: Institute for the Study of Americas, 2008. pp. xxii, 195. £15.00.

This collection of essays, edited by Bill Schwarz, participates in a recent upsurge in scholarship regarding the works of Earl Lovelace, a Trinidadian writer perhaps best known for his 1979 novel *The Dragon Can't Dance*. Although Lovelace has achieved sporadic attention from critics throughout the years, Schwarz's collection, the first book-length study of Lovelace, appears at a time of heightened interest in Lovelace's oeuvre. This heightened interest is in part a result of the "Lovelace @ 70" celebration and conference organized by the St. Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies. Held amidst the threat of Hurricane Emily in 2005, this series of events, including a production of Lovelace's *Jestina's Calypso*, an academic conference and various other celebrations of Lovelace's seventieth birthday, seems to mark a turning point in the production of Lovelace scholarship, with more and more critics exploring his contributions to Caribbean Literature. Though not associated with the conference, Schwarz's collection takes a leading role in this increasing conversation which includes various recent dissertations and most especially the Fall 2006 special issue of *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal* which published selected papers from the "Lovelace @ 70" conference.

What is especially endearing about Schwarz's collection is the breadth of its content. Schwarz is careful to balance essays which closely read Lovelace's novels with essays that highlight the cultural context. Kate Quinn's discussion of Trinidadian cultural policy and publishing industry is an especially useful contribution, while Lawrence Scott's personal reflection on Lovelace nicely honours Lovelace's effect on his fellow Trinidadian writers, of whom Scott is one. Although the collection's main focus is acknowledged to be Lovelace's novels and short stories to the exclusion of his drama, his writing for children, and his recent collection of essays (*Growing in the Dark*, 2003), this book succeeds adeptly both in furthering criticism on the already well-discussed *The Dragon Can't Dance* and in drawing attention to Lovelace's

lesser known works. With three essays primarily devoted to *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Schwarz's collection communicates the continuing importance of that novel in discussions of Caribbean Literature, but Lovelace's later novel *Salt* (1996) also receives in-depth consideration with three essays focusing on it. Furthermore, *While Gods Are Falling* (1965), *The Schoolmaster* (1968), *The Wine of Astonishment* (1982), and *A Brief Conversion and Other Stories* (1988) are all represented within this collection.

Beyond offering important discussions of Lovelace's various texts, this collection demonstrates a careful choice of essays that address many of postcolonial criticism's key themes, including questions of self-formation, nation, language, orality/performance, and history. With Chris Campbell's "Illusions of Paradise and Progress: An Ecocritical Perspective on Earl Lovelace," this collection even incorporates the more recent movement towards eco-criticism in Caribbean literary scholarship. In its coverage of these key areas of postcolonial thought, and more specifically of Caribbean literature, this text serves as an excellent introduction both to Earl Lovelace's work and to the broader concerns of Caribbean literature.

Even though the collection in its composition does draw on themes common to Caribbean literary study, I do wonder if the collection's title—*Caribbean Literature after Independence: The Case of Earl Lovelace*—does justice to the text's main contribution. This collection is not a text about the very general and problematically vague "Caribbean Literature after Independence." It is rather specifically about Earl Lovelace and his writing, though seen within the context of Caribbean, particularly Trinidadian, post-independence literature and culture. A title that more effectively highlights the collection's specificities—Earl Lovelace and his position within Trinidadian literature—would have alleviated the text's current misrepresentation of itself and, more importantly, would have better drawn attention to its distinctiveness as the first collection of essays on Lovelace. As both Schwarz and Kate Quinn in their separate contributions to this collection emphasize, Lovelace is an especially important figure in terms of Caribbean Literature. While his contemporaries were choosing the life of emigrés in order to succeed as writers—Quinn cites Andrew Salkey, who comments the choice was "'emigrate or vegetate'" (21)—Lovelace stayed put. Although his choice to remain in Trinidad was in part made for him by his failure in the national exams and consequent inability to pursue education abroad, what Lovelace, in the end, perhaps unintentionally proved was, "it was indeed possible to remain in the Caribbean and to follow the vocation of writing" (Schwarz, Introduction xiv). As such, the study of Lovelace's work provides many opportunities for further exploration of the depth and variety of Trinidadian experience and aesthetics. Lovelace's value as

both a writer and a cultural figure is too well communicated throughout this collection to have the collection's title obscure this excellent focus.

I also wonder about this collection's somewhat awkward situating of itself as "offer[ing] a (mainly) non-Caribbean, North Atlantic reading of [Lovelace's] fiction" (Schwarz, Introduction xii). Although an acknowledgement of the collection's limitations can be quite important, Schwarz's announcement that "I have never heard a parang band, danced the Bamboula, nor seen a stickfight, and I guess this is true for many of the contributors to this collection" (Introduction xviii) can seem rather jarring, especially since the essays themselves do not seem to preserve this sense of 'outsiderness.' The essays are not concerned with viewing Lovelace from a distinctly North Atlantic perspective, but instead work to elucidate Lovelace's position within Trinidad itself. With, for example, Schwarz's own exploration of folk forms (religion and dance) and the comparison of Lovelace's work with the work of various other Trinidadian writers (namely, C. L. R. James in Alan Love's essay and Lawrence Scott in Patricia Murray's), this collection demonstrates careful research which has mitigated, though perhaps not solved, the problem of having almost solely non-Caribbean contributors.

As I hope is apparent, my concerns with this collection come not in response to weaknesses in the collection itself, but rather to its reluctance to see and communicate its own importance. This collection is a vital contribution to scholarship on Lovelace not only in furthering critical discussions but in motivating interest in Lovelace's lesser known works. Furthermore, it offers engaging essays that work well together to produce a collection that is unified in ways that few essay colltections accomplish. Readers of this collection need not worry about any of its potential weaknesses since it offers many strengths.

Veronica Austen

Gill Plain and Susan Sellers, eds. *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. $125 (U.S.).

A History of Feminist Literary Criticism, a collection of essays edited by Gill Plain and Susan Sellers, provides "not a 'post-feminist' history that marks the passing of an era, but rather a 'still-feminist' one that aims to explore exactly what feminist criticism has done and is doing from the medieval era to the present" (1). The editors rightfully represent their "freshly commissioned chapters" (3) as both accessible introductions and invaluable resources—due to the depth and breadth of the authors' engagement with the original source